

ancient superstitions—have practically become established throughout the world. The impulse may be deadened by long-continued habit. Peoples who have settled down to the routine of agriculture are usually much attached to their fields and homes. But those who subsist by pasturing cattle, or by cultivating the land after a shifting fashion, or become hard pressed for food, are liable to be strongly moved by it. For uncounted centuries it has impelled the peoples of Northern Europe towards the Mediterranean; more recently it has urged them to establish colonies of their own across the seas. Nor has it always led the wanderers towards the superior comfort of a promised land. The Vikings have roamed northwards into a more rigorous climate and harder conditions than they experienced in their Eastern home. In the migratory instinct is seated the attractiveness of travel, and the impulse, hardly to be resisted by the most home-loving of English families, to go abroad, or to the seaside, once a year.

We may perhaps find in this desire for change the origin of three very curious human pleasures—the pleasures of the ludicrous, of gambling, and of intoxication. In all of them an agreeable emotion is associated with sudden changes of mood. If instances of the ludicrous, in circumstances or in words, are analysed, it will be found

that the essence lies in an abrupt alteration of mental attitude, which must not however be attended with the excitement that would be caused by any personal interest, and must not arouse any so serious an emotion as pity, or indignation. This condition is essential. A passer-by slips and falls on the pavement. Our